



# Dialogue

Spotlight Nomination Form-P. 12!

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## Consumer Spotlight

### From NICU to 'Peek-A-Boo' The Wonders of Early Intervention

**K**elly and Ron Kato are thankful that children under age three don't have to be diagnosed with a developmental disability to receive therapeutic services through the Regional Center. As part of the Early Start program, their son Kyle has received services for two separate developmental delays and is well on his way to "graduating" from the program when he turns three in May. To see this lively little boy riding a tricycle, playing with his toy cars and hamming it up in front of a camera, you would never know that as an infant his life hung in the balance for weeks.

Kyle was born with a diaphragmatic hernia, which means his intestines tore an opening in the muscle that separates them from the chest cavity and pushed aside his heart and lungs. It took doctors about four days to stabilize him before they could perform surgery to correct the condition. He had to stay in the neonatal intensive care unit for 30 days, and his parents and doctors were not certain that he would live, or if he did, that he would be able to see and hear.

His mom Kelly said, "I cried so much when I was still in the hospital [recovering from a caesarian section] that my roommate rang for the nurses and told them, 'There's something wrong with her.' When they learned I wasn't in physical pain, they didn't

*Kelly Kato and her nearly-three-year-old son Kyle enjoy a moment of mirth. Even though Kelly is relieved that Kyle is all right now, it is still painful for her to recall Kyle's first few months of life, when she didn't know at first if he would live, and then wondered if he would be blind or deaf.*



know what to do, so they said, 'Let us know if you need anything' and left the room."

Kyle had been transferred immediately after birth from Long Beach Memorial Hospital to Children's Hospital of Orange County. His dad Ron slept in a chair at CHOC for four days while Kelly remained at Long Beach Memorial. Then they were referred to the Ronald McDonald House near CHOC where they were able to live the rest of the time Kyle was hospitalized. (Ronald McDonald Houses are residences, located near children's hospitals, supported by charitable donations that provide temporary housing and meals at low or no cost to families of seriously ill children that have to travel far from home for treatment.)

*See 'Kyle,' page 8*

## Call For Nominations

This year the **Spotlight Awards Official Nomination Form** is included as part of the *Dialogue* newsletter, starting on page 12. Please consider nominating that deserving someone you know for an award in one of 14 categories. Nominations must be postmarked by July 30, 2004. Also, mark your calendar for this year's awards ceremony on Friday, September 10, 2004 at the Irvine Marriott Hotel.

## In This Issue

- Call for Nominations ..... 1
- Consumer Spotlight ..... 1
- Legislative Update ..... 2
- From the Executive Director ... 3
- Consumer Advisory Team ..... 4
- Safety Corner ..... 5
- Comfort Connection Update ... 6
- Orange County Head Start ..... 7
- Operation Housecall ..... 7
- CalOPTIMA Update ..... 9
- Dental Resources ..... 9
- Important Things to Know ..... 10
- Spotlight Awards letter ..... 12
- Spotlight Awards Official Nomination Form ..... 13
- Spotlight Categories ..... 15

### Several State Budget Changes Potentially Affect People with Developmental Disabilities

By Karen Chen, RCOC Board of Directors

Periodically you may hear from the Regional Center or read in the newspaper about proposed cuts to regional center budgets and services to people with developmental disabilities. You should also be aware that cuts to other public programs may also have a negative impact on services that consumers utilize. Medi-Cal (CalOPTIMA in Orange County), In-Home Supportive Services and California Children Services are examples. I urge you to monitor the news, and when you hear about such proposed cuts, contact your state assemblymember and senator to let them know how such reductions will affect you or your family member. You will find a list of the state legislators and the areas they represent on RCOC's Web site at [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com). See "Governor & Legislator Contact Information" listed under March 2004 in the green "What's New" sidebar.

#### **Parental Co-Pay Proposal**

In the last issue of *Dialogue*, I reported to you that on March 1 the Department of Developmental Services was going to release two draft proposals for implementing a parental co-payment program for families of children ages 3 through 17 that receive regional center services. As it turned out, one version had the Department administering the program



and the other had the regional centers administering it. The Department took public comments during March and released its final proposal at the beginning of April as a Report to the Legislature. You can see it at [www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov).

#### **Share of Cost Affects Three Services**

Many features have changed from the first two proposals, not least of which is that the family cost participation will begin on January 1, 2005 — if the proposed program gets approved by the Legislature — not July 1, 2004 as previously indicated. The program has been labeled the Family Cost Participation Assessment Program, and the share of cost would affect only three services: respite, day care and camping. It would apply on a sliding scale only to families with income 400 percent or more above the federal poverty level (as adjusted by family size) whose children that receive RCOC services live at home with them and are not Medi-Cal eligible. The range of the family cost participation would be five percent for a family at 400 percent of the FPL to 80 percent for families with income of 1300 percent of the FPL or higher. That means that a family of four with an income of \$73,600 — which is 400 percent above the FPL — with one child with a developmental disability living with them, would be obligated to pay five percent of any of the three specified services received from the Regional Center. For families with two or more children receiving regional center services, the cost participation would be offset by 50 percent for the second child and by 75 percent for the third child. Families would not share in the cost of services for additional children.

#### **Regional Centers To Administer Program**

The way the program is set up, families would need to submit in-

come verification to the Regional Center, but the Regional Center would not collect any money from families. The Regional Center would pay its portion of the authorized services, and the family would then purchase the remaining authorized services directly from the service provider.

#### **DDS Designed the Program**

Since last November, the Department has solicited input from stakeholders — family members and others — about how best to administer the program. Some of that input was incorporated into the final proposal. In its Report to the Legislature, the Department specified the basic principles that guided its development of the proposed program. Those included maintaining the health and safety of consumers, upholding the integrity of the family (by not creating an unacceptable burden and encouraging families to continue caring for children in their own home), and making the program simple and cost effective to administer; e.g., the costs to administer the system cannot exceed the revenue it generates.

The program does not appear to allow for appeals. The Department's rationale is that an appeal process isn't warranted because the program is limited to three targeted services, is based on a sliding scale that applies only to families with income at or above 400 percent of the FPL, and includes a re-determination process when there's a significant change in the family's ability to pay.

Questions about the Family Cost Participation Assessment Program can be addressed to Department of Developmental Services, Administration Division, 1600 Ninth Street, Room 310, MS 3-3, Sacramento, CA 95814.

## The Case for Equity in Resources

By Bill Bowman

The Department of Developmental Services has proposed Purchase of Service Standards that would apply uniformly to every regional center – a significant change from the Lanterman Act’s current requirement that every regional center have its own set of local guidelines for purchasing services. The reason for the Department’s action is the state’s Budget Act of 2003-04 that stipulates “a reduction of \$100 million General Fund through the implementation of state-wide purchase of service standards across the 21 regional centers.” The implication of having statewide standards is loss of the flexibility that allows each local community to tailor services to its unique needs.



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***In Orange County, both the Regional Center board and the community support having clear-cut parameters from the state.***

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Some people adamantly oppose statewide standards for that reason, also contending that they will do away with the individualized mode of service provision, via the Individual Program Plan, put into place by the Lanterman Act. In Orange County, both the Regional Center board of directors and the community support

having clear-cut parameters from the state as to what it will fund on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. In fact, several parents I’ve spoken with recognize that taxpayer dollars are a limited commodity and there’s a need to exercise restraint and accountability in spending them. They want the regional center system to remain financially sound so that it will still be here to care for their children for the rest of their lives. Clear direction from the state is the only way to guarantee reasonable access to services for everyone and to sustain the entitlement to services created by the Lanterman Act.

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***Parents want the regional center system to be available for the rest of their children’s lives.***

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If that direction comes in the form of uniform standards for services, that’s fine, as long as they will achieve equity of resources throughout the state. Without a framework guiding expenditures, the system’s spending on services can – and has, in some parts of California – become like a runaway train. That happens when the services that get authorized go beyond “need” to “want” and the negotiated rates paid to service providers are allowed to vary widely.

All this is not to say that RCOC supports the POS Standards currently proposed (you can read them at [www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov)). As written, they will likely increase rather than decrease Orange County’s expenditures. We have been working with the Department to refine the standards so they will indeed achieve

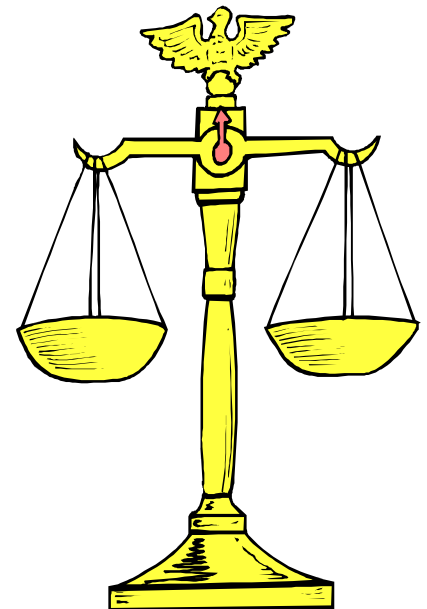
equity of resources and still meet people’s needs.

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***As written, the POS Standards will likely increase rather than decrease Orange County’s expenditures.***

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Straightforward, specific guidelines would go a long way toward achieving equity throughout California by defining what the state government is willing to pay for. By equity I mean ensuring that every person with a developmental disability, whether living in San Diego or San Francisco, has equal access to services in the form of fair funding for each regional center. I believe that’s the only way to truly underwrite the system long term and make sure that the promise of the Lanterman Act remains in place for future generations.



# R.A.D.D. Review

## Consumer Advisory Team (CAT) Update

By Michael Bailey, Chairman

*The Consumer Advisory Team (CAT) is a group of consumers that meets once a month.*



*The group discusses issues that are important to RCOC consumers, such as advocacy and independence. The CAT advises the RCOC board of directors about the group's concerns.*

About 35 CAT members and other RCOC consumers will attend the National Self-Advocacy conference at the Anaheim Marriott Hotel on May 27-30. CAT member Sam Durbin will be the keynote speaker at the conference. Other CAT members are involved with conference activities. The CAT members will share what they learned at the conference with other consumers. As CAT chairman, I will tell the RCOC board of directors about the conference.

### **Car Wash May 15**

The team will hold a car wash on Saturday, May 15 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. to

raise funds to send members to the Supported Life Conference in Sacramento in October. Everyone is welcome to bring their cars to the Orange County ARC parking lot, 225 West Carl Karcher Way in Anaheim. The cost is \$10 per car.



### **Meeting at Goodwill ATEC**

The February CAT meeting was held at Goodwill ATEC (Assistive Technology Exchange Center). The staff gave demonstrations of assistive technology equipment for people with a wide range of disabilities. It was really great. We received a lot of information about what the equipment is able to do and how people can benefit by using it. Consumers who get a referral from Regional Center, CalOPTIMA, Department of Rehabilitation, or private insurance can go to Goodwill and have tests done

to determine what kind of equipment is best for them. The equipment is funded by foundation grants. The team wrote a letter on behalf of Goodwill for another grant.

### **Fund Raiser Coming Up**

The CAT team's second fund raiser for the Supported Life Conference will be selling sponsor certificates starting in June. Donors can buy \$5, \$10 or \$20 sponsor certificates. After the conference, CAT members will host a dinner to thank people who donated \$20 or more.

### **Come to a CAT Meeting**

All consumers are welcome to come to Consumer Advisory Team meetings. They are held on the third Wednesday of the month. The meeting time is 10:00 a.m. to noon. The meeting place is usually the RCOC East/Central office at 801 Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana. Support staff are also welcome. Transportation is not provided by RCOC. Please call Betty Bath at (714) 796-5263 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.

## Watch Out For Tricks and Lures!

Hello Safety Friends,

This is Cautious Kyle again. As you know, the **GET SAFE™** instructors are always in the community providing trainings for you, and that is where Safety Stu has been. Safety Stu has asked me to fill in for him in the meantime.

Springtime is here; the weather is getting warmer and the surf's up! That probably means that most of you will be out having fun with your family and friends, and that is why we will review **Tricks and Lures** in this issue. Sometimes people may try to trick you into going with them or doing something for them. The one safety tip that will help you with this is the same tip we always talk about in our classes...*don't talk to people you don't know.*

Let's use an example: I'm sitting at a bus stop waiting for my bus to arrive. A man drives up where I am sitting. The man asks me if I want to go to the movies because he has free tickets. He tells me he will buy me soda, candy, and whatever else I want. The problem is, I don't know this person. Should I go? NO! In

fact, I should already be running to a safer place such as a busy store or restaurant. Then I can tell someone that somebody may be trying to hurt me.

You never want to go somewhere with anybody that you don't know. Also, you should never go with someone you do not know *well*, even if that person says that they know your family or staff members. If there comes a time where you really want to go somewhere with somebody, and you are not sure if you should go, ask someone else you trust first. People



like parents, caregivers, and staff members are great people to ask.

We at **GET SAFE™** are proud of your accomplishments. If your friends have not had a chance to yell **BACKOFF™**, please make sure to share your safety tips with them. We look forward to seeing you at another training. If you have a safety question for Safety Stu and the Safety Team, write to us. Send your letter to Safety Stu, c/o RCOC, P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA, 92702. If we use your question in Safety Stu's corner, we will send you a safety t-shirt absolutely free.

Thanks for staying safe,  
Cautious Kyle in for Safety Stu





## Spring Means End of School Year Planning

By Hedy Hansen, FRC Manager

**B**efore we know it, summer vacation will be here, and after that another school year will begin! As always, the parents who staff Comfort Connection Family Resource Center are happy to assist you with preparing for IEP planning meetings and exploring summer activities.



In addition, I'd like to offer several online resources that you might find helpful with your IEP preparation.

### IEP Planning

[www.pai-ca.org/pubs/401601.htm](http://www.pai-ca.org/pubs/401601.htm)

This link takes you directly to the special education section at Protection & Advocacy's Web site. You will find "Special Education Rights & Responsibilities" as well as "18 Tips." Information is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese.

[www.nichey.org](http://www.nichey.org)

The National Information Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities has information in both Spanish and English covering disability fact sheets to IEP strategies. My favorite publications are "Communicating with Your Child's School Through Letter Writing" and "Developing Your Child's IEP."



[www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed/col\\_ordrfrm.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed/col_ordrfrm.pdf)

Any parent of a child who is eligible for special education services is entitled to a free copy of the Composite of Laws. This link takes you directly to the order form at the California Department of Education Web site. Other useful information regarding special education can also be found at the Department's Web page at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).

A tip I can add to all these resources is to encourage parents to partner with your school teams. I know it can be overwhelming, because as parents we sometimes feel there is so much we have to learn to even participate effectively. Parents should never be afraid to ask questions and seek information. I wholeheartedly encourage you to talk with other parents, such as those of us at the FRC, to get support and collaborative suggestions for success.



### Summer Activities

As for planning summer activities for your child with special needs, check out your city Parks and Recreation Department to find out about day camps and other recreational activities that may include children with disabilities. Most city Web sites are listed as follows:

[www.ci.CITYNAME.ca.us](http://www.ci.CITYNAME.ca.us). You can also link to your city's Web site from the County of Orange Web site at

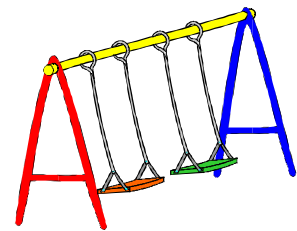
[www.oc.ca.gov](http://www.oc.ca.gov), click on "OC Links," then click on "Local Regional Government." And, of course, you can find your city's telephone number in the Government Pages at the front of your phone book's White Pages.



For other camping opportunities, check out the California Camping Guide at [www.acasocal.org](http://www.acasocal.org).

Another idea your child might benefit from is Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. For Girl Scouts, look in the White Pages under "Girl Scouts," or call (800) 478-7248 or look at [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org). For local information about Boy Scouts, call the Orange County Council at (714) 546-4990 and find out more about the organization at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).

I hope these resources will spark your creativity as you delve into ideas for summer fun and ways to assist with your child's IEP. As always, feel free to call on the staff at Comfort Connection FRC and check out our wealth of books, brochures, and videotapes as well as other reference materials. You are welcome to stop by Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana, or call us at (714) 558-5400.



# Orange County Head Start Invites Applications For Preschool and Early Head Start Programs

Federally-funded Orange County Head Start offers two free comprehensive child development programs to children from birth to five years old from low-income families. Children with disabilities are welcome in the programs, and income eligibility requirements are more flexible for these families. The programs provide education; social, health, nutrition and disabilities services as well as parent involvement to qualifying families.

The Preschool and Early Head Start programs serve nearly 4,000 children and their families at 43 centers in Orange County and Hawaiian Gardens. Orange County Head Start partners with the community to provide a wide range of services to make a positive impact on the lives and future of children and families. The focus is on quality early childhood development in order for children to grow educationally, socially, physically and emotionally.

The programs also assist parents with increasing their knowledge, skills and understanding about their child's growth and development. Staff members also help families access other community resources. Parents can be decision makers in the programs by participating on the policy council and center committees.



The Early Head Start Program serves pregnant mothers in addition to 60 children from birth through 36 months of age at two full-day centers and in the home-based option. The home-based program features educators who make 1½ hour visits to conduct parenting activities and

discuss parents' concerns. They assist the parents in setting family goals for working with their children.

Preschool classes for children ages three and four are center-based and held either four or five days per week in a part-day or full-day setting, depending on the family's needs.

Orange County Head Start operates centers in Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Orange, Placentia, San Juan Capistrano, and Santa Ana. Applications are accepted all year at any Orange County Head Start center or at the Head Start administration office, 2900 South Harbor Blvd. Suite #100, Santa Ana, CA 92704. For more information or the address of a center near you, call Orange County Head Start at (714) 241-8920.

*Information contributed by Geri Brklevich, disabilities manager, Orange County Head Start.*

## Operation Housecall Educates UCI Medical Students

Operation Housecall is a program in which second-year medical students make home visits to families or adult consumers to talk with them about the unique challenges they face in accessing appropriate medical care. Operation Housecall is a collaborative project developed in 2001 by Area Board XI and the University of California, Irvine Medical School to educate future physicians about the lives and medical needs of children and adults with developmental disabilities.

The response from medical students who have participated in Operation Housecall has been overwhelmingly positive:

"This was...wonderful...I didn't know much about autism prior to this experience."

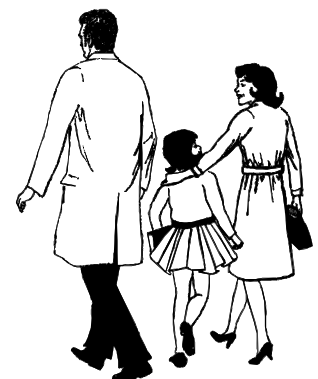
*"They (the families) had a lot of suggestions for future physicians."*

"I had no idea what living with Down Syndrome was like."

*"It helped...reinforce the need to treat the patient and family as one unit."*

Operation Housecall is a wonderful opportunity for families and consumers living independently to educate the medical community about their experiences with the medical system. They can also share about the importance of having medical providers who are familiar with

the needs of people with developmental disabilities. If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Paul Eisenberg at Area Board XI, (714) 558-4404, for an application.



## Kyle (from page 1)

Kyle's big brother Ryan, who was almost four at the time, had to stay for an extended period with Kelly's parents and didn't understand why he couldn't be with his mommy and daddy. He felt rejected by them until they were able to arrange for him to stay at the Ronald McDonald House with them.

After the family's initial ordeal, life settled back into a more normal routine. Not only had Kyle survived, but his vision and hearing seemed fine. Fortunately, the aftercare provided by CHOC is extensive, including regular visits from a public health nurse and ongoing medical appointments at CHOC. When Kyle had his six-month follow-up appointment, the doctors thought his physical development was slower than it should be, so they referred him to the Regional Center. After an assessment of his overall development, he was diagnosed with a gross motor delay (he wasn't sitting up on his own or crawling), so he received physical therapy for six months, at which point he started walking!

Kelly said, "They were able to



*Kyle Kato shows off his ability to maneuver his own "fire truck."*

intervene early so it didn't become a major problem. He was delayed, but with the services, he was able to progress and move along really quickly. It's a comfort to know that people are watching, monitoring him. When you bring home a medically fragile child, you worry about whether they'll be okay. It's very stressful. I would think the worst case scenario until I talked to Chris [the public health nurse] or Karen [Karen Cambare, Kyle's RCOC service coordinator]. We had such great care. I knew he was going to be okay."

The Regional Center kept his case open for a few months to monitor Kyle's progress, so when Karen called about the time Kyle was 18 months old, Kelly expressed concern that he was speaking only five words. Karen arranged for a speech assessment, and Kyle had a language delay, so he has been receiving speech therapy for more than a year.

Now he talks so much and so fast that sometimes even his mom can't understand him. At that point he claps out words one syllable at a time as his therapist taught him, to break down the words into smaller units. A humorous by-product of Kyle's speech therapy is his Canadian accent – he has learned well from his speech therapist Stacey, who is originally from Canada.

Service Coordinator Karen also gives Kelly credit for Kyle's progress. She said, "For the babies, I really think parents have a very active role. Kelly always followed through on intervention techniques and stimulation. It's amazing to see what early intervention does."

Kelly is grateful for the support and services her family has received from the time Kyle was born, from CHOC to public agencies to volunteer organizations. She said, "You take a pretty terrifying experience, and you think, why did this happen?"

But you come out of it seeing all the goodness in the world. So many people give anonymously, not for any recognition, but just because they want to. What was nice is we were never asked about our income. It was just, 'You have a child in need.' The focus was on the child."



*Since starting to walk at 14 months old, Kyle has truly caught up to his age level in his motor skills.*

### California Early Start Program

Early Start is a state- and federally-funded program, administered in California through the regional centers, which provides the early intervention services such as speech, physical or occupational therapy to children under age three that have a significant delay in one or more developmental areas. If you know a family who has concerns about their baby's or young child's development, please let them know that they can self-refer to the Regional Center by calling (714) 796-5354. After an initial screening call, either an appointment will be scheduled for an in-home assessment or, if it's clear that the child is not eligible for services, they will be referred to other resources in the community .



## News From CalOPTIMA

*This is a new column that will appear in each issue of Dialogue to let you know what's new at CalOPTIMA. If you have any questions about the information, please feel free to call Chanté White, CalOPTIMA liaison for RCOC, at (714) 796-5213.*

### Program Overview

By Chanté White, CalOPTIMA Liaison

Greetings from the CalOPTIMA desk! Below is an overview of some of the programs available to our members in an ongoing effort to improve the quality of health care services.



**8Rx Limit** - The program was implemented to reduce the unnecessary and excessive use of prescription and over-the-counter medications, which increases the risk for adverse drug reactions. The limit is eight prescriptions per member per calendar month. A CalOPTIMA Pharmacy Authorization System (CPAS) form is required for the approval of more than eight medications per month. Members with HIV/AIDS, transplant patients, cancer patients, and patients who live in nursing or sub-acute facilities are exempted from the limit. Service providers may request exemption from CalOPTIMA, which will be reviewed.

#### **Member Orientation** -

CalOPTIMA provides an orientation for new and current members. It's CalOPTIMA 101 in one fun-filled hour! We give an overview of the

services provided, such as our Pharmacy Program, referral process, developing relationships with providers, and more. Orientations are provided in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. We'd like to see you there!

#### **Health Promotions & Disease Management** -

Services include group classes such as Diabetes Care, Smoking Cessation, Weight Loss & Hypertension Control, and more. The licensed staff members provide community presentations in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. You can also call the Health Information Phone Library to listen to recorded health topics. Please call CalOPTIMA Customer Service at (888) 587-8088 for details and class schedules.

Please feel free to call me at (714) 796-5213 for additional information about the 8Rx Limit and Member Orientation schedules.

## Dental Resources Available to People with Developmental Disabilities

Families of children with developmental disabilities sometimes have a difficult time finding a dentist who can provide extra care and understanding for their child. Oftentimes, when children and adults with developmental disabilities have dental work done, they need sedation or general anesthesia because of extreme anxiety or involuntary movements. Families and consumers may be able to obtain certain dental services or referrals through CalOPTIMA via Denti-Cal, Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County, and/or California Children Services. Each organization has specific eligibility criteria, some of which are given here.

CalOPTIMA members are automatically eligible for Denti-Cal services. CalOPTIMA members who

require general anesthesia for dental services can work through the referral process with their RCOC service coordinator and CalOPTIMA case manager.

Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County is a nonprofit currently serving children age five and under, with a temporary location at the Orange County Health Care Agency, 1725 W. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Ana. Parents can make an appointment for an oral health assessment for their children by calling Jose Vargas at (714) 834-7705. If dental work is needed, a treatment plan will be developed. Services are provided on a sliding fee scale based on family income. Healthy Smiles is not a Denti-Cal or Healthy Families provider, but the cost of services is very affordable.

California Children Services provides dental services for patients up to age 21 with eligible conditions that may affect their dental health. Eligible conditions include cerebral palsy, seizure disorders, congenital heart disease, and chronic kidney disease as well as other conditions. General anesthesia is covered if it is deemed necessary. Referrals need to be made by a school nurse, dentist, orthodontist, primary care physician, or a specialty physician.

Consumers and families can contact their RCOC service coordinator for additional assistance in accessing these resources.



## Important Things to Know...

**Abilities Expo** is coming June 11-13 to the Anaheim Convention Center, 800 West Katella Avenue. Explore the most recent advances in disability products and services, test new products and talk one-on-one with service providers. Attend free educational workshops, see equipment demonstrations. Obtain a free admission pass by visiting Comfort Connection Family Resource Center at 801 Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, calling the FRC at (714) 558-5400 or by e-mailing your request to Patti Arnold at [Parnold@rcocdd.com](mailto:Parnold@rcocdd.com). For more information about Abilities Expo, call (800) 385-3085 or visit [www.abilitiesexpo.com](http://www.abilitiesexpo.com).

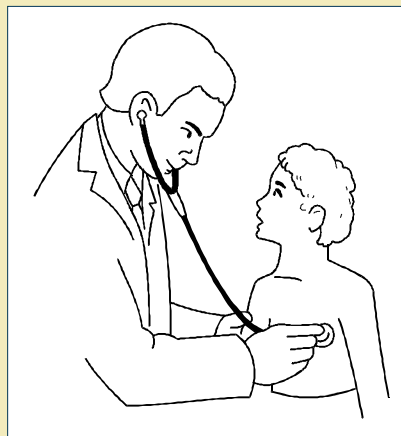
**City of Irvine Fifth Annual Jack Williams Memorial Golf Tournament** – will take place on June 21 at 10 a.m. at the Oak Creek Golf Club in Irvine. Proceeds will benefit people with disabilities. Tournament fee is \$100 per golfer and includes green fees, cart, lunch and awards reception. Registration deadline is June 3. Contribution opportunities such as sponsorship packages, team entries, raffle and silent auction donations are available. For more information, call (949) 724-6633 or visit [www.ci.irvine.ca.us](http://www.ci.irvine.ca.us).

**VSA arts Call for Entries** – “Driving Force” is the theme for this year’s national juried exhibit for young artists with disabilities, ages 16-25. Entries must be postmarked by August 6, 2004 and there is no entry fee.

Fifteen finalists will share \$30,000 in cash awards. Eligible submissions will be two-dimensional artwork such as paintings, drawings, fine art prints, photography, and mixed media. For additional information and to download an application, please visit [www.vsarts.org/programs/vw/](http://www.vsarts.org/programs/vw/) or request an application from VSA arts, (800) 933-8721, extension 3877.



**UCI Mobile Clinic** provides exams and vaccinations for children ages birth to five on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the following locations: first and third Friday of each month at Warwick Square Apartments, 7200 S. Lyons Street, Santa Ana; second Friday at Park Vista Apartments, 1305 N. Wren, Apartment B, Anaheim; and fourth Friday at Hansen School, 1300 S. Knott Avenue, Anaheim. For appointments or cancellations, please call (714) 456-7011 or toll free (866) 456-7011.



**California Nursing Home Search** is a new resource designed to help the general public, health care professionals and other interested parties find information on the state’s 1,406 nursing homes. This tool is an interactive Web site, [www.calnhs.org](http://www.calnhs.org), which provides comprehensive, user-friendly comparative information. The site includes information on each nursing home that includes facility and resident characteristics, nurse staffing levels, quality performance indicators, results of complaint and inspection visits, financial indicators, and ownership. Users can search for facilities by location, name, services offered, certification, and ownership type. For an informational brochure in English or Spanish, call toll free, (800) 278-0990.

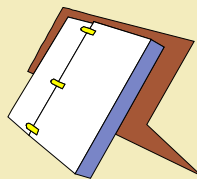
**A Disabled Discount Pass** is available from the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation for \$3.50. This is a lifetime pass that entitles the bearer to a 50 percent discount for use of all basic facilities (including day use parking, camping, and boat/day use parking fees) at any unit of the California State Park system operated by the State Department of Parks and Recreation, except Hearst San Simeon. The discount does not apply to fees under \$3 or supplementary fees and cannot be used with any other discount or pass program. You can also apply for a free fishing license and wildlife area pass that is renewable each year. If you are interested in either of the above passes, please contact your RCO service coordinator.

# Important Things to Know...

**Apply for RCOC's board of directors** ... The Regional Center of Orange County's board of directors is made up of people with developmental disabilities, family members of people with developmental disabilities, and other interested residents of Orange County. Board members volunteer their time at board meetings every other month and at monthly committee meetings. The board sets policies that provide direction for RCOC's operations. Board members serve three-year terms. You can obtain a Board Membership Application from RCOC's Web site at [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com) or by calling RCOC's Executive Office at (714) 796-5205. The board's Recruitment Committee evaluates all membership applications and interviews applicants to select candidates who are elected by the full board.

Since the summer of 2000, families have received a copy of RCOC's informational binder, **A Parent's Guide to Services**, when they apply for Regional Center services for their child. Some of the information in the binder has changed. Most if not all of these changes have been announced in *Dialogue* or by other means, but here is a rundown of the major updates.

- ◆ The South Area office has moved from Laguna Hills to San Juan Capistrano (p. 9). The telephone number is (949) 234-8800.
- ◆ Because of state budget cutbacks, the eligibility deadline for anyone



over age three applying for RCOC services (p. 13) has reverted back from 60 to 120 days.

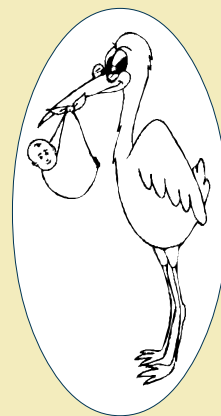
- ◆ The Community Resource Center (pp. 25-26) merged with Comfort Connection Family Resource Center (FRC). The telephone number changed to (714) 558-5400. Comfort Connection is located adjacent to the lobby of RCOC's Santa Ana office at 801 Civic Center Drive West.

- ◆ The Consumer Rights Complaint Process (page 31) has changed slightly. For a copy of the current Consumer Rights Process brochure, request one from Comfort Connection FRC at (714) 558-5400.

- ◆ The Fair Hearing timeline for mediations to be scheduled (pp. 35 and 37) has changed from 20 to 30 days.

- ◆ The Early Start Coordinator's telephone number (p. 38) has changed to (714) 796-5339.

**If you are pregnant, know the signs of premature labor.** Premature or preterm labor is when you go into labor three or more weeks before your due date. Giving birth too early can mean serious and sometimes life-long health problems for your baby.



Here are the warning signs:

- √ Contractions every 10 minutes or more often
- √ Clear, pink or brownish fluid leaking from your vagina
- √ The feeling that your baby is pushing down
- √ Low, dull backache
- √ Cramps that feel like your period
- √ Cramps with or without diarrhea

If you have any of the warning signs, call your doctor or go to the hospital right away. If the symptoms get worse or do not go away after one hour, call your doctor again or go to the hospital. If the symptoms get better, relax for the rest of the day.

Take care of yourself and your baby by:

- ◆ Getting regular prenatal checkups. Start as soon as you know you are pregnant. Go to every appointment.
- ◆ Staying away from alcohol and cigarettes. They are not good for you or your baby. Using illegal drugs may start premature labor.
- ◆ Trying to avoid stress. Ask family and friends for help if you need it.
- ◆ Calling your doctor if you feel burning or pain when you go to the bathroom. That may indicate an infection.

The Pregnancy & Newborn Health Education Center at the March of Dimes can help you learn what you need to know about pregnancy and parenthood. For more information, visit [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com), call (888) MODIMES or e-mail questions to [askus@marchofdimes.com](mailto:askus@marchofdimes.com).



REGIONAL CENTER  
OF ORANGE COUNTY

May, 2004

Dear Friends of Regional Center of Orange County:

On behalf of the Regional Center of Orange County and the Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce the eighth annual RCOC Spotlight Awards. This year the Spotlight Awards dinner and dance will take place on Friday, September 10th from 6:00 p.m. to midnight at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. Last year's event attracted more than 800 people to honor the contributions of those who excelled in their service to individuals with developmental disabilities. This year's event promises to be equally inspiring, featuring the introduction of a new category for nominations, the **Healthcare Professional Award**.

The **Healthcare Professional Award** will acknowledge a very important relationship for RCOC consumers. Consumers and families rely on healthcare professionals to provide quality care along with compassion and understanding. These individuals have a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Please help us to launch this new award by nominating a deserving individual, or by forwarding an application packet to others who may be interested in nominating.

I invite you to nominate an individual or organization for a Spotlight Award in one or more of the following categories: Community Partnership, Consumer, Employer, Frontline, Nick Garrett, Healthcare Professional, Lifetime Achievement, Living Options (Residential) Vendor, Parent/Family Member, Professional Achievement, RCOC Achievement, Support Services Vendor, Volunteer, and E. Kurt Yeager Servant Leadership. Nominations in the Nick Garrett and E. Kurt Yeager Servant Leadership categories will be selected by the Regional Center Board of Directors. All other nomination categories will be judged by a panel representing the Orange County community.

The enclosed nomination form must be postmarked by Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Nominees will be recognized in the event program, and formal invitations for the 2004 Spotlight Awards will be sent in July.

Please mark your calendar for Friday, September 10th, and take some time to nominate a deserving individual or organization. Additional application packets are available from the RCOC office or can be downloaded from our Web site: [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com). If you have any questions about the nomination process, or if you would like to consider becoming an event sponsor, please contact Jacqui Kerze, Spotlight Co-Chair, at (714) 796-5299.

Sincerely,

Holly Nogales  
President, RCOC Board of Directors

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010 • [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)

Corporate Offices  
Tel: 714/ 796-5100  
Fax 714/ 541-3021

East/Central Area Office  
Santa Ana  
714/ 796-5100 (24 hours)  
TDD 714/ 667-6021  
Fax 714/ 973-0336

North Area Office  
Orange  
714/ 685-5555 (24 hours)  
TDD 714/ 685-5575  
Fax 714/ 282-7910

South Area Office  
San Juan Capistrano  
949/ 234-8800 (24 hours)  
TDD 949/ 488-3399  
Fax 949/ 488-3366

West Area Office  
Westminster  
714/ 889-7200 (24 hours)  
TDD 714/ 889-7234  
Fax 714/ 889-7222



Regional Center of Orange County  
2004 SPOTLIGHT AWARDS



Official Nomination Form

**Nomination Rules:**

A developmental disability is a substantially handicapping condition beginning before age 18, is expected to be lifelong and is attributed to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or conditions similar to mental retardation.

- Use one nomination form for each nominee in each award category.
- Complete front and back of this form.
- Do not submit photos, videotapes, or any other material with the Official Nomination Form.
- You may photocopy this form if you are nominating more than one person. Additional forms can also be downloaded from the RCOC web site at [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com).
- No individual or organization may receive an award more than once in five years.
- Judges and their immediate families are not eligible.
- All nominations will be verified.

**Please indicate category:**

- |                                                  |                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Partnership   | <input type="checkbox"/> Living Options Vendor             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer                | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family Member              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer                | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Achievement          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frontline Award         | <input type="checkbox"/> Support Services Vendor           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nick Garrett Award      | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> RCOC Achievement                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Achievement    | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Kurt Yeager Servant Leadership |

**Nominee Information:**

Name of Individual, Organization or Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:       Home                       Work

\_\_\_\_\_

Street

City

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

**Your Information (Nominator):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

**Mail completed nominations postmarked by 7/30/2004 to: Jacqui Kerze, Regional Center of Orange County, P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010**

or deliver to:

**801 Civic Center Drive West, Suite 100, Santa Ana, CA**

**If you have any questions about this packet, please contact Jacqui Kerze at 714-796-5299.**

**Regional Center of Orange County**

**2004 Spotlight Awards**

- *Please type or clearly print your answers below.*
- *Please give specific examples which address the criteria listed in the selected category.*

1. Describe what the nominee has done to deserve an award in the category you have selected.

2. Describe how this person or organization has had a positive effect on people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

**NOMINATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, July 30, 2004.**

# 2004 SPOTLIGHT AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

**Community Partnership.** An organization or individual that demonstrates exceptional leadership and creativity in expanding meaningful opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to become full participants in community life.

**Consumer.** An individual who has a developmental disability whose personal example and achievements inspire others and advance awareness about the capabilities and talents of people with disabilities in Orange County.

**Employer.** A business that demonstrates exceptional leadership and creativity in expanding integrated employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

**Frontline Award.** An individual whose direct service to people with developmental disabilities has demonstrated exceptional ability to enhance the life of one or more RCOC consumers. For example, nominees might include (but are not limited to) instructional assistants, in-home caregivers, job coaches, and personal assistants.

**Nick Garrett Award.** People and organizations that have no previous personal or professional connection to the developmental disabilities community, but who nonetheless step forward to extend themselves through remarkable acts of generosity and compassion toward those with developmental disabilities.

**Healthcare Professional.** A healthcare professional who has demonstrated exceptional care, compassion and understanding to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

**Lifetime Achievement.** An individual whose personal, professional or volunteer activities, **over a long period of time**, have made **exceptional contributions** toward enhancing the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

**Living Options (Residential) Vendor. A residential service provider** that demonstrates excellence in support to people with developmental disabilities through the development and/or operation of living options that are responsive to the developmentally disabled individual's choice, dignity and quality of life.

**Parent/Family Member.** A parent or other family member committed to improving the quality of life for his/her family member, as well as others with developmental disabilities, through support, compassion and advocacy.

**Professional Achievement.** An individual employee in an organization, other than a regional center, serving people with developmental disabilities whose professional achievement demonstrates exceptional contributions that reflect the best practice in the field of developmental disabilities services.

**RCOC Achievement.** An RCOC employee whose professional contribution, while an employee of the Regional Center of Orange County, demonstrates exceptional accomplishments toward fulfilling the Mission and Guiding Principles of the organization on behalf of people with developmental disabilities.

**Support Services Vendor.** A support services provider that demonstrates excellence in support to people with developmental disabilities through the development and/or provision of support services, **other than residential**, that are responsive to the developmentally disabled individual's choice, dignity and quality of life.

**Volunteer.** An individual with the demonstrated willingness and commitment to voluntarily act on behalf of people with developmental disabilities, and whose volunteer activities bring about a quality of life that are characterized by enhanced community acceptance, participation and personal self-sufficiency.

**E. Kurt Yeager Servant Leadership Award.** The recipient of this award is an individual who has served in a **volunteer leadership** position in an organization that serves people with developmental disabilities. This person's efforts have resulted in significantly expanded opportunities for participation in policy-making roles for people with developmental disabilities. Additionally, this individual's leadership of the organization has resulted in improvement of the quality of supports and services provided to people with developmental disabilities.

**R**egional Center of Orange County is a nonprofit, private agency that contracts with the California Department of Developmental Services to coordinate services for approximately 13,500 children and adults with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

Dialogue is published four times per year by the Regional Center of Orange County for people with developmental disabilities, their families, service providers, and members of the community.

Dialogue can be read online at RCOC's Web site: [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com).

Editor: Karen Taylor, (714) 796-5208, e-mail: [ktaylor@rcocdd.com](mailto:ktaylor@rcocdd.com).

### Board of Directors 2003-2004

Holly Nogales, President  
 Steve Sherman, Vice President  
 C. Terrence Fletke, Treasurer  
 Wendel Starkey, Secretary  
 Michael Bailey  
 Karen Chen  
 Patricia Daley  
 Christian Dubia, Jr.  
 Joyce Hearn  
 Tresa Oliveri  
 Jud Robert  
 Steven Tanner  
 Kim Vuong

### 2003-2004 Board Meetings

Mar. 4 ❖ May 6

Meetings start at 6:00 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana. The public is welcome.

### Regional Center of Orange County Administration

Bill Bowman, Chief Executive Officer  
 Janis White, Chief Operating Officer  
 Bette Baber, Chief Financial Officer  
 John Abernatha, H.R. Director  
 Cinda Bottorf, Developmental Resources Director  
 Arleen Downing, MD, Medical Director  
 Adam Gottdank, Outcomes Director  
 Larry Landauer, Consumer and Community Resources Director  
 Ed Scherer, Information Services Dir.  
 Patricia Glancy, Intake Manager  
 Emily Lloyd, North Area Manager  
 Rosalinda Lopez, East-Central Area Mgr.  
 Keli Radford, West Area Manager  
 Amy Williams, South Area Manager

Westminster Office  
 13950 Milton Ave., Suite 200  
 24-hour phone: (714) 889-7200

San Juan Capistrano Office  
 26311 Junipero Serra Road, Ste. 180  
 24-hour phone: (949) 234-8800

Orange Office  
 3111 N. Tustin Street, Suite 150  
 24-hour phone: (714) 685-5555

Santa Ana Office  
 801 Civic Center Dr. West  
 24-hour phone: (714) 796-5100

**Four locations to serve you:**

**SPOTLIGHT AWARDS  
 Nomination Form Enclosed**

Regional Center of Orange County  
 P.O. Box 22010  
 Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010  
 Dialogue Newsletter

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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